

don't think it even benefits the Republican Party politically to send this young American woman like her away.

But it is up to Republicans and Democrats to stand up for Brittany, Saul, and Mayron. Democrats must be clear that we value the contributions of these young people and will not allow their stories to be ignored.

Republicans—even the brave ones who have said that they are for solving the plight of the DACA kids—must do more than write a letter or whisper quietly in the Halls that they hope something happens.

It is up to us right now. I am not leaving, and I am not shutting up until we do.

#### GOD WORKS IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, this is a very difficult speech for me to give.

God works in mysterious ways.

When you are an elected official, missed votes require an explanation. That is why I disclose this otherwise very personal, very private, and very humbling matter.

On Halloween night, after votes, as I stood on the Capitol steps, my doctor called and said: Congressman BROOKS, bad news. You have high-risk prostate cancer. I felt an adrenaline rush as a chill went up and down my spine.

By way of background, prostate cancer kills almost 27,000 American men each year and is the third leading cause of cancer deaths behind only lung and colorectal cancers. Seventy-one percent of prostate cancer patients die in less than 5 years if the prostate cancer has spread beyond the abdominal cavity. In stark contrast, almost all prostate cancer patients live longer than 5 years if the cancer is discovered early and killed before it spreads.

For example, my father discovered his prostate cancer early. He lived four decades after his prostatectomy. My grandfather discovered his prostate cancer too late. He died not long thereafter.

After my doctor's diagnosis, I called my wife, Martha, who was back home in Huntsville welcoming trick-or-treaters and shared the bad news. That night was one of the loneliest nights apart in our 41-year marriage. I kept thinking about my wonderful family: What do I do next? How do I beat this cancer?

Overnight, I formed a plan and began implementing it.

In an emotional meeting, I informed my Washington staff of my cancer, that I was immediately flying to Huntsville after a CT scan that afternoon, and that, for medical reasons, I would be in Alabama the rest of the week.

Based on advice from friends and doctors, I chose Dr. Scott Tully as my

treating physician. Dr. Tully is widely respected and has performed more than 3,000 prostatectomies. On Thursday, Martha and I drove to Birmingham to obtain Dr. Tully's insight about treatment options and risks. He advised a radical prostatectomy.

At Dr. Tully's direction, I undertook a heart stress test and a nuclear bone scan. Finally, I got some good news. My CT scan and nuclear bone scan revealed no cancer beyond the prostate. My heart stress test confirmed that I am strong enough to undergo the 2- to 3-hour surgery.

Prostate cancer mortality data is compelling. Speed is critical in the fight against prostate cancer. In compliance with the 2017 House calendar that set end-of-year votes on December 14, and at some risk to myself, Dr. Tully and I delayed my surgery until December 15—this Friday—and set a postsurgery medical procedure for December 20. My plan was to recuperate at home during the holidays with my family and return to Washington for a full workload when Congress reconvenes on January 3.

Unfortunately, last week the House Speaker abruptly changed the House voting calendar that I relied on to set my surgery. As a result, next week I will miss House floor votes unless I am unexpectedly medically cleared to travel.

There are three insights from my experience that I wish to share with the public. First, don't ever, ever take your health or family for granted. During the holidays, enjoy your family because no one—no one—is promised tomorrow.

Second, I encourage age-appropriate men to have regular PSA tests. While PSA tests do not diagnose cancer, my PSA spike persuaded me to have the prostate biopsy that revealed my high-risk prostate cancer early enough for me to enjoy a very good cure prognosis.

Third, I ran for the Senate in 2017. I finished third out of nine candidates in the Republican primary. Had I won, I would not have had time for my physical and PSA test. I would not have had a prostate biopsy. I would not now know about my high-risk prostate cancer that requires immediate surgery.

In retrospect, and paradoxically, losing the Senate race may have saved my life. Yes, God does work in mysterious ways.

#### CELEBRATING THE 381ST BIRTH- DAY OF THE NATIONAL GUARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 381st birthday of the National Guard.

A component of the United States Army, the National Guard is primarily composed of citizen soldiers who hold down full-time civilian jobs or attend

school. At the same time, National Guard members are available to provide support and protection for their States or to be called for military operations for the country. They serve their community and their country.

Each U.S. State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories of Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands maintain both an Army National Guard and an Air National Guard.

The Massachusetts General Court issued an order on December 13, 1636, requiring all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 to create a standing Army for protection. With that order, what we now know as America's National Guard was born. The idea was simple: establish an Army of citizen soldiers who could be called upon to fight when needed.

In honor of the National Guard's birthday, here are some lesser known facts about the branch: each member of the National Guard is sworn to uphold two constitutions, Federal and State. The term "National Guard" didn't become an official term until 1916. 50,000 members of the National Guard were called to take on various missions during the 9/11 attacks in 2001. Only two Presidents have served in the National Guard in its modern structure: Harry S. Truman and George W. Bush.

The National Guard is older than the Army. Militias were used as early as 1636 to protect British colonies. The U.S. Army wasn't formed until the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

American Samoa is the only territory of the United States to not have a National Guard unit.

National Guard units were called minutemen during the American Revolution due to their rapid response ability.

The most senior member of each State National Guard unit is the adjutant general. Some States elect the adjutant general while others have their Governor appoint someone to that position.

The National Guard formed one of the first all-African-American units in U.S. military history, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers. Their creation was met with mixed reactions, but the unit serves to this day, and the first African American to receive a Medal of Honor, William Harvey Carney, hailed from it.

The National Guard is second only to the United States Army in terms of number of members.

Mr. Speaker, I commend all those who join the ranks of the esteemed National Guard. They answer the call of duty to protect their community and their country. We are grateful for their service and proud of their commitment.

Happy 381st birthday to the National Guard.